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## AFRICA 1960—

Nicholas Mosley

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# *Focus*

Creating its popular image has been keeping the Labour Party busy ever since the general election. What it wants is for the public to have a warm and favourable picture of it, so that at the next election they will be only too happy to vote it back into power.

The Church of England is less sophisticated. Most of its members regard image-making as unworthy of Christ's Church. Then if you tell them that the Romans do it—by seeing that they get a good press, by their well-mannered but persistent advertising, through the *haute école* excellence of their TV performers, as well as by a steady supply of actors, journalists, novelists, and others of the new élite—they will say that all this is un-English and infra dig. The C. of E., on the other hand, they feel has no need to cheapen itself in this way, because thanks to the wisdom of our forefathers, it is attuned to the English temperament; deep down the average person has a high regard for the church and the vicar, even though he may not actually come to the services. And the pious will add that with more prayer and more priests, we might even get him to do that again. "Towards the conversion of England", they say, and process for a few hesitating steps in a tight circle.

Meanwhile the public outside goes on having its own blurred image of what the Church of England is like, focused now and then into antipathy by rough handling in the press (though the *Daily Mail* pretended to objectivity in Passion Week, Tanfield, when he bothers, can be almost as vicious as John Gordon). It is an inaccurate image, a confused hotch-potch of church parades and auntie's funeral and not swearing and something that's all right at Christmas after a drink or two. From inside we can easily be supercilious about this muddle, and decide that it is high time the ignorant natives knew better; but the point about images is not whether they are right or wrong, but *whether they exist.* Our job is not to say, "You've got us wrong", but to demonstrate by our activities both a truer and a better image. At the moment, for all the bold attempts of TV and Mervyn Stockwood and J. B. Phillips to show that religion matters, and to make the C. of E. not a national but a popular church, it isn't.

It would be a good thing for a start if insiders grasped what the popular image of the C. of E. is. *Prism* this month begins a discussion between articulate Anglicans, like Monica Furlong (who can, as her *Spectator* articles show, speak intelligibly and amusingly of her faith to those outside it) and others, like the Australian Murray Sayle, who will readily label themselves C. of E., but who reflect in their hesitancy that imprecision which dogs the Church's witness. Another important article on the subject by the philosopher Bernard Williams will appear next month.

# *The Agnostics and Us*

MONICA FURLONG

"But there must be some mistake! I'm an atheist!" protested a man in a recent *New Yorker* cartoon when the Devil materialised on his hearth-rug. It seems to me that the artist of this enchanting joke got his jargon a little wrong (unless American unbelievers are very different from British ones). The man would have been more likely to have declared, "I'm an agnostic".

For while agnosticism seems to be smarter than ever, there just don't seem to be the atheists any more, at any rate not over the age of fourteen. The word itself now has a nostalgic, old-fashioned quality about it and the intelligentsia would no more associate themselves with it than they would go out wearing knickerbockers and a Norfolk jacket. If it does not conjure the pathetic puritanism of the Marxists, it at least evokes food reform, or nudism or the horrors of vegetarian cookery (how unfairly association works!) and few intelligent people now care to be seen rowing in those dreary galleys. But agnosticism is still the *dernier cri* for those not bound body and soul to a more definite and exacting knowledge. If I were not irrevocably in the second category I would be an agnostic myself.

For one thing the word "agnostic" has a graceful air of connoisseurship about it, at once suggesting that a man has given God the same discriminating attention that he gives to selecting his claret or choosing a pair of ski-boots. He has given God the same appraising glance, and, regretfully, emerged unimpressed.

"It isn't that I wouldn't like to, you see . . ." one imagines innumerable sentences beginning, or

"Goodness knows, I don't pretend to be self-sufficient . . ." or

"I mean, I often think it must be awfully nice to believe in God and all that . . ." or

"It isn't as if I haven't *tried*."

From the wistful tone of his voice one infers years of unsuccessful seeking and not finding, knocking and not being opened unto. Here, one is invited to believe, is a man who is god-blind, just as others are musically or artistically incapable. He is not proud of it as the old atheist was, nor arrogant enough to believe himself the master of his fate. But he bears the inconvenience with self-conscious bravery as he would an obtrusive physical disability.

"Go on, cure me," he sometimes seems to be saying, "but I jolly well bet you can't!"

The modern agnostic is a lot nicer to Christians than the old atheist die-hards used to be. He is quite happy to mix with them,

to wine and dine them, and often indeed seems to go out of his way to befriend them and to talk about their "subject". He is rarely an anti-cleric, and, despite all the articles one reads about it, he doesn't seem too much bothered by the impact of science on Christianity. He is not naive enough to think that Darwin or Freud irreparably cracked the foundations, or even to think anything proved by the fact that the Church Commissioners used to be slum-landlords in—where was it? Paddington? In fact, the boot is on the other foot. Let you in a mood of exasperation, deprecate some impulsive Archiepiscopal statement, or deplore an idiot vicar who wants to bring back the birch, or say what a bore you find chastity, and the agnostic will at once be all fair-mindedness.

"I think he's rather a dear, myself," or

"Oh come, isn't that rather unfair?" or

"I find the idea rather refreshing in these dissolute days".

Before you know where you are, you are disloyally wearing the the mantle of carping critic, and agnostic friend, all sweet reasonableness, is on the side of the angels.

Agnostic friend is often surprisingly well-informed about the details of the Christian life and takes an amused interest in keeping you up to the mark. Even as late as Mothering Sunday, agnostic friend often remembers (tiresomely) what you gave up for Lent and insists you keep to your fast, even on Sundays.

"Let's see, you're off alcohol, aren't you? What a shame! A large Scotch and a pineapple juice, please."

Agnostic friend, though sometimes ignorant of the bones of the Christian faith, the stark doctrines which furnish the mind of the believer, is often well up in the jargon to an extent which is most unnerving.

"Now do tell me, what is the difference between *homo-ousios* and *homoi-ousios*?" he asks or

"What happens if a Roman priest has a heart-attack just after transubstantiation has taken place? How do they finish it off?"

Agnostic friend, always the well-read man, takes an intelligent interest in what the religious are up to, deriving quite a lot of vicarious enjoyment from their battles and conflicts.

"I say, that Carshalton business was exciting wasn't it? What do you think he'll do next?"

Agnostic friend, for all his delightful dilettantism, occasionally turns on one and cries with an appalling bitterness," You're trying to convert me!"

IS ONE TRYING TO CONVERT one's agnostic friends and if so, ought one to be?

When someone turns on me and says in that hateful tone of voice, "You're trying to convert me", I feel at once stricken with guilt, as if all this while I have been masquerading as a friend while exchanging messages with an enemy power over a walkie-talkie radio.

"I'm *not* trying to convert you," I reply, trying to explain that while I would be delighted if agnostic friend became a Christian too, the only reason I have for talking about religion is because I can't stop myself. But at this point one's friends say scornfully, "Oh yes you are!" and there one is, back again, feeling exactly like Klaus Fuchs.

The trouble is, I think, that Church propaganda, particularly on the parish level, tends to build up exactly this picture of a somewhat unscrupulous system of infiltration and conquest. Parishes, particularly ones that have what they call "missionary awareness" are always on about strategy and tactics, campaigns and Operation this and that. Some figures of speech have been, most curiously, borrowed from the Communists. More have come from the jargon of war. I have not yet heard of a Vicar carrying out a blitzkrieg on his parish, but it would not in the least surprise me. I remember an inter-denominational mission which used to dash about London just after the war calling itself the Christian Commandos. The Christian is encouraged to see himself as part of a lonely little garrison of the truth, a warrior perpetually embattled for Christ, an N.C.O. of an other-worldly army. The purpose of all these martial metaphors is, I suppose, to build up the morale of the Christians (though it frightens the wits out of me). But inevitably the gist of such pep talks leaks out to what one seems bound to call "the enemy" and it is hardly surprising that they build up a terrific resistance. How on earth can they trust people who regard them with the calculating eye of the old-fashioned press-gang? Why on earth should they fancy enlisting for what appears to be an additional stretch of National Service for both sexes?

It is time, I think, that (in spite of St. Paul) we firmly rejected all similes, metaphors, images and figures of speech borrowed from soldiers, and while we are about it re-examined our ideas on conversion.

I don't know about you but when I invite the woman next door in for a cup of coffee, it is not tactics or strategy, and it certainly isn't Operation Teacup. It's because I want to know her, without any ulterior motive (at least I hope not), though if I can come to love her that's fine by me. If religion comes up naturally we will talk about it. If it doesn't, we won't.

Similarly when I invite agnostic friend to dinner, I am not carrying out a clever *coup* in enemy terrain. I just like the man and want to talk to him.

Too obvious to be worth saying? Well maybe. But I think if you look and listen you will come to think as I do, that there is too much talk of conversion throughout all the churches, and too little of love. And every time we talk in battle-winning, scalp-collecting, head-counting, soul-numbering terms, we are in danger of exploiting people for our own vanity. Worse, in our pomposity we are making it intolerably hard for agnostics to get an inkling of the love of God.

# *Confitebor Tibi*

## THE IMAGE OF ANGLICANISM

MURRAY SAYLE

*A young Australian novelist, contributor to* Encounter, *whose first-born,* A Crooked Sixpence *will be published shortly.*

When I think of the Church in an intellectual way, I suppose I am thinking of the Church of Rome, and the shell-proof revetments and bristling heavy guns of that marvellously-constructed mental Maginot Line: but when I think of the church personally, emotionally, affectionately, I think of St. George's Church of England, in Earlwood, Sydney, Australia, where I was baptised and began my religious education thirty and more years ago.

I remember St. George's vividly, or, rather, the child in me remembers, as a child does: what it looked like, what it smelt like (soap and disinfectant, mostly: it is "low", as I later learnt), the pulse and drumbeat of the incomparable language of the service, losing nothing in an Australian accent: and, of course, I didn't at the time know that the rector, or I, had an accent. But what I learnt there, I can no longer distinguish.

My family are Anglicans and always have been, as far as I know: with our name, our language and our customs, it goes back into our irrecoverable past. So, as the prayer-book commands, I was taken along to St. George's for baptism at seven weeks, and then to Sunday-school, and then, as is commanded, prepared for Confirmation.

I have often read the Book of Common Prayer since, and the Bible, of course, and I cannot be sure what I remember from my instruction in childhood. What is my name, N. or M? Mine actually *is* M., and I remember my sister was envious of this small distinction. We learnt of the life of Jesus, who suffers the little children, and of the Holy Land, and of God who is from eternity, and of the way of righteousness. Sin was what you shouldn't do: death, and heaven and hell, were remote from us, and we heard little about them. It was never explained why this was the church *of England:* in Australia, most things are *of England,* and no explanation was called for.

In my early instruction, I never heard one word against any other faith, or those who practise them: I was never scared by hell-fire, or told that anything about human life, or myself, was unclean. For this, I am deeply grateful to the Church of England: it is because of this bright area of my childhood, unstained by fear of any kind, that I think of her with affection. My spirituality, such as it is (I want to discuss this more in a moment) I owe to her.

Now, you may say, there was nothing *religious* about this. If you want to press me, I must concur: if you mean the panic fear of death and torment, the exaltation of the hope of salvation, I know nothing of this in childhood and hardly know what you are talking about now. If you keep up the attack, and point out that I have drifted away from the Church of England, that I do not communicate, I admit that too. It is not, however, from hatred, or even dislike, and certainly not from indifference to the issues involved. I can only urge those charged with educating the young, in any persuasion, be gentle with them: better they go with love than stay in fear.

The incumbent at St. George's (I was distressed to hear recently that he has died) I remember as a very decent, worthy man. I don't mean these words slightingly, in any sense. He played in the church cricket eleven, he was a keen Freemason, and to the people in his care he was a good and unpressing friend in trouble and bereavement. Above all, he was a man of great dignity. It wouldn't surprise me that he barely scraped through his course in theology. But I don't suppose any of his congregation ever put a theological question to him.

I have often met Anglican clergymen like him in Britain: sun-tanned in summer, good gardeners, capable fingers tamping pipes as they offer kindly advice to some parishioner in overstuffed leather armchairs in book-lined studies decorated with team photographs. I am not sneering at this: in my writer's way, I participate, I am there, I identify. I was baptised by that sort of man. I like him.

St. George's has not got a Norman tower, or a Grinling Gibbons screen: it was built, I suppose, about 1920, good solid brick and a tile roof, no restoration problems for many years yet, very plain and austere inside, offering its satisfaction only to the ear and the imagination: in a garish new suburb of a sprawling Sydney, all sub-division and builder's dunnage and the ink hardly dry on Terrens titles, an island of . . . but of what? Decades later, I still wonder.

You may, perhaps, think that my affection for the astringent plainness of St. George's marks me as very much a "low", emotionally at least: I think of it all the more warmly, closer to my temperament, just because it lacks even the back-handed kind of vain splendour and luxury represented by ancient buildings of historic interest. Certainly, this aspect of the Church of England, hard and plain, contemptuous of decoration, all verbal and ornamented only by a tremendous imagery, has in recent years brought me with some sort of understanding close to Judaism, and for this I am grateful. On the other hand, her other side, the past, the tradition, the well-oiled links going back a little way, at least, to man's beginnings, the not-dropped-down-in-the-last-thunder-storm quality of Anglicanism is my link with the Church of Rome,

and I try to feel myself inside the pride in something which has endured, as it were, as long as anyone can remember: so often in apparent danger of foundering, so often rebuilt from the inside, but still afloat, still vital. I am grateful for this too.

I suppose the Anglicans I know best, in a way, are my parents. They communicated but not, as I remember, punctiliously, and certainly put no pressure on me to do so. My father was a Freemason, and a close friend of the man who baptised me: he was, I think, buried by him.

My father was not, seemingly, very religious: at least, religion spoke to him in terms of decency and kindliness, and doing his duty. An Anglican type, you may think, perhaps with a touch of pride: if so, a well-merited one, I should think. The only time I ever heard him discuss an outwardly religious matter was when, as a very small boy, I used some term about Roman Catholics I had picked up at school (I didn't have much idea of what they were, of course): he rebuked me with the full weight of his authority and I never did it again. You may say he failed in his duty in not giving me a more positive religious lead. I do not know, for sure, what he believed himself, if it makes sense to examine, in a formal, propositional way, what anyone believes, other than as a theological test-paper. However, whatever he may have told me was *the case*, in the sense of a creed, pales into insignificance before what I absorbed from my father and my family in terms of emotional, or, if you like, spiritual inclination: it is the terrible sense of duty, that you must do it the hard way, and there is always a way harder than *that*; that you must be kindly and indulgent to all men, as far as you can, *except yourself*. I don't pretend for a second that I have followed this code, except very occasionally, but I am haunted by it, and in my odd moments of exaltation I am glad that I am haunted by it.

This is the protestant side of Anglicanism (I am using "protestant" in a merely descriptive way, to have a word, and I trust I tread on no toes). Or, if you like, and paradoxically, the non-conformist side. A part of Anglicanism it surely is: otherwise, where did I get it from? At its best, it can be a lofty kind of religion, entirely without magical or pseudo-scientific elements, a little like lesser-vehicle Buddhism; its vice is that dreadful, life-denying respectability. I don't suppose any martyr has ever seemed respectable, in his time.

SOMEWHERE IN HIGH SCHOOL or at university—I don't remember where, exactly—I entered, personally, into the conflict which has dominated thought for the past three centuries or so, Galileo versus The Church. The Church, if it meant anyone, meant Rome, because that was where the heavy guns were, and that is what I mean by my opening paragraph. I thought, I read, I learnt about Source Q and all that, I studied the Book and even the Articles, for what use *they* are in such a pass, and I chose—Galileo. If someone

held the spiritual pistol to my head again, if the question was put to me *in the same terms*, even without the questioning temper of a very young man, with all his intolerance of the powers-that-be, I think I would make the same choice again : Thomas is my patron and I still say it moves.

No one told me that there is no conflict, that you can't see the attic from the basement even though they have the same address. No articulate Christian I came across in those days was prepared to meet me, even quarter-way, in finding a mutually acceptable terminology, and why should he have?—they were busy, no doubt, thinking about The Heathen. Like most sceptics I soon became something of an expert on the doctrinal points which divide the sects, which seemed to reinforce my choice. This sceptical comparative investigation is the underside of oecumenism, the damaging kind imposed on Christianity by its critics, from which no one gains.

Rome, I believe, faced with this rebellion from a son, would put up a fight, even a hopeless one : so would the Plymouth Brethren. The dear old C. of E. is hardly ever baited, viciously, by the truants : she is too proud—or genteel is it?—to fight. In worldly battles, at least, this is the way to lose.

I proceeded to my studies in English history—in Australia, *our* history—and for the first time I learnt something of the origins of the religion into which I was born. My historical—sorry, historiographical—method is to go back there and absorb, as best I can, the atmosphere. Having recently been Galileo arraigned before the Curia, I caught the historical train to London, the middle of the sixteenth century, myself a copyist, perhaps, or something to do with the new printing industry. As now, I get all the books I can, I talk to anyone who wants to, and I feel the tremendous conflict of my time : the absolutism of the Tradition and the Organisation on the one hand, the tyranny of the Word and the Conscience on the other. Both are immoderate, far out, uncompromising : it is with relief that I take the middle of the road and give my assent to the articles, not cravenly or quietistically, but giving as good as I get, in that fine brusque language, to the Papists sniping from one hedge and the Anabaptists from the other.

Faced with the two tyrannies, our forebears turned, at the time very sensibly, to the referee, the State—the State then was an organisation remote from the ordinary man, its main function dispensing justice and ensuring fair weight. You still get an echo of the far-off, on the whole kindly, Tudor State and what it did when you read on the label that Scotch is bottled under Government supervision, so it *must* be ten years old. Little did the C. of E. guess that it had backed the winner, that the State would one day lay claim to men's loyalties, to their minds, more monstrous than any Church ever has—that, indeed, the State would become the religion of the early twentieth century, for which martyrs would die in their millions in Flanders mud. The first Elizabeth had no

brainwashers or psychological warriors in her service. The far-off marriage of Church and Tudor State was, from our point of view, but the story of the Owl and the Pussycat, but now the Owl finds she is riding the tiger's back. Nearly everyone seems to agree that it is time, and more than time, to get off.

It is lawful, we read, for Christian men to wear weapons and serve in the wars. This seemed to the pacifists of the time to sanctify the horse-pistol and the arquebuss, and so, in a way, it did, but in those days it was perhaps no bad standpoint to adopt in the eternal Christian dilemma about arms: at any rate, the Convocation thought it a matter demanding a position, one way or the other. It still is, but has the notion "weapon" got no limits? Gunsmith's wares, perhaps, but the nucleus, with its punishment unto the fourth and fifth generation, the very vengeful Law the Christian re-interprets? Is a lying propaganda campaign, punishing even further into the future, a weapon? I don't blame the British State for defending itself, or the tiger for his stripes, but I can see them just the same.

I recognise that the State has been a good friend to the Church of England. It is the only branch of the Christian tree that I can think of that has (apart from the Cromwellian hurricane, soon spent) never known persecution, certainly never since the Great Compromise, and I suppose its relaxed quality comes from this. Persecution hardens, trues, and energizes, but it embitters and narrows at the same time. Nor, armed with the terrible State power, has it persecuted as much as it perhaps might have, although I think we might all forthwith repent and make restitution for any persecution of which history may accuse us, political or religious.

AND SO I ARRIVED IN BRITAIN divided from the Church of England, but still deeply interested to see her on her home ground. What divides us? I think, words. I see medieval Christianity, the point of all our departures, as a supreme intellectual edifice, the masterpiece of generations of wordsmiths, but incorporating, irrelevant as the bishop's gaiters, the whole *weltanschauung* of medieval science. Dogma by dogma, miracle by miracle (what is a *miracle*, but an upside-down pronouncement, made by unqualified persons in the name of "common sense", that some event can be given no mundane explanation?) most of the irrelevances have gone, but the words remain. We know about words now, better than our forebears did. They are most imperfect ways of communicating, or even of thinking. They are like biscuit-cutters, with harsh metallic edges which cut out arbitrary shapes and leave most of the dough behind. They are certainly nothing for men with a common purpose to argue over. But, how else can they *know* they have a common purpose?

Talking to Anglicans in Britain, I think I feel the dilemma. No Anglican, probably no Christian, wants the mantle of Torquemada.

But he doesn't want to exchange it for the mantle of the Vicar of Bray. Sociologically speaking, a Church is a community, men organised ideally, in their Godlike aspect, the criminal side left outside the door along with the weapons and the how-to-vote cards. Communities depend primarily on emotion, but so does the ant's: communities of men are unlike any other because of their words.

Take the word "true". Long ago, as a student, I asked myself if Christianity is true, having just learnt that Boyle's Law is, and Lamarck's hypothesis isn't. I know much more about the word now: it is a first cousin of German *Treu*, faithful, staunch, upright, good: a house truly built, we still say; can we meet in this meaning?

You may object that I am galloping in the direction of some sub-human, non-verbal communication, and perhaps I am: certainly the American Beat Generation are, with their odd interest in Zen Buddhism, the direct pointing to emotion. I feel the attraction of this system, but the old Enlightenment objections come up: Zen is but the voice of protest, and of conscience, stilled by the fear of an impregnable and vindictive tyranny. And the tyranny, I suppose, is that of the mushroom-shaped cloud, and the smooth and terribly verbal nationalisms and political religions which brandish it in your face.

I HAVE TOUCHED IMPRESSIONISTICALLY on the history of my religious opinions in order to declare my interest, as the lawyers say, and to describe to you the eyes with which I saw Anglicanism when I arrived in Britain. My progress is a common enough one, and allows me to select another costume from history's wardrobe and appear before you as the Ordinary Man, certainly as the Anglo-Australian ordinary enough man.

I went to church soon after I arrived, in a London suburb. It was a stabbing touch of home, of far-off St. George's, to hear again those thrilling words, the language which is so well understood by the intellectuals and the would-be First Elizabethans, even if it is no longer so very well understanded of the people. It has taken four hundred years, but it has been worth it if it helps us understand why the Romans have clung so stubbornly and affectionately to their Latin.

It is hard to conceive of Anglicanism without English. In the mouth-filling phrases we all know by heart, all we Anglo-Saxons meet in that cosy, clubby atmosphere, we're all decent chaps here, subscriptions up to date, and sweetly through the vestry window we hear the distant pock of the guns on the grouse moor, the murmur of applause as Christopher plays that exquisite late cut.

Romantically, I wallow in that world, but I know it for what it is, Cockaigne, the far-off land of Betjemania, if I may be forgiven for abusing the name of a poet who has often pleased me. When you get down to it, it is a branch of the antique furniture trade. I am

deeply suspicious of that community, real enough in the past, perhaps, phony in the present when only the élite are furnished by time and the rest, the great majority, by Times. Of course, the words, the time-polished formulas, move me. So, not so profoundly, *but in the same way*, does *These Foolish Things*. They both remind me of the good old days. I photograph the Norman tower and I return, alone, to the twin racks of the twentieth century conscience, sex and arms.

Think of the intricate web that bound the medieval man to his community, to other men; all the different ways in which he belonged. To us, they seem to have dwindled to the soldier's oath and the marriage vows: the huge, devitalised, ersatz communities which are nations in arms, the cramping little alliance of husband and wife and the children against a competitive world. Marriage just will not bear the strain we want to put on it: it can't be church, club, manor, village, order and home too, all at once.

The Owl hasn't much for me on this. Magdalen was a wicked lady, we're decent chaps here and we don't mention these things in the club. Rome at least has a position on sex: not one that attracts me, but I feel from outside the quiverings as the giant wrestles internally with this old and dangerously modern problem. It seems I must make my own position: but I have a horror of these latter-day monstrous do-it-yourself religions, like Hitler's, or, to use your terminology, of what Man alone can do.

THE IMAGE OF ANGLICANISM. Fundamentally, my own is home, red brick and tiles, the deficit hardly met on the building account. But let us see if we can find a better one, in history. Reading and recreating, as best I can, I see the first Christians, hiding in caves and in cellars, at first grief-struck because the Teacher is dead, then the dawning hope that, somewhere, He lives, He will return: then, as the years pass and the first primitive hope dims, slowly and imperceptibly, under Divine guidance if you like, the Greater Hope takes its place, and the world sees the primary, the incontestable Christian miracle, the change in heart and life of the believer, even, incredibly, to the point that he longs for the teeth of the wild beasts. I feel the criminality and death in myself, I long to identify.

Then I see another image. It is the harrassed, overworked Roman magistrate, busy enough keeping up with the press of events, wondering what to do about this new threat from the East: these strange people, disturbingly far out, fully committed, in fundamentals absolutely uncompromising. Traditionally, he tests them with the formula: they fail on the first article. What are they? Are they Communists, or drug addicts, or a Beat Generation rejecting Roman success and prosperity; or are they irresponsible, ignorant of the great Roman past, living on some sort of hire-purchase? The magistrate doesn't know, but he senses the threat to the Roman State religion, the basis of all her glories, the good old

faith, so tolerant, so worldly-wise, not very thrilling, perhaps, and not to be taken *too* literally, but such a successful compromise and doing harm to no one. Musing before that interesting old statue of Jupiter, Greek work, he believes, with some fascinating detail around the thunderbolt, he sees what he must do, for Rome and Emperor and the things in the world that endure.

The Anglican in me identifies with him, too. The wheel has come full circle.

# *South Africa 1960*

Nicholas Mosley

A hundred miles north of Pretoria I gave a lift to an Afrikaaner. He was a young house-painter, going through a bad patch in business. "Man, it was good of you to stop," he said. "People don't give lifts much now. They're afraid of being held up. Get to a lonely piece of road and—!—a gun in your ribs." He prodded me. We were on a very lonely piece of road.

"And never give a lift to a native," he said.

"This trouble with the natives? Man, I'm telling you, you've only got to look at them. They're like animals. Rather than have one coming to my house and asking my daughter out, I'd rather me and my daughter were dead.

"We've got to shoot them, man. We've done everything for them, we've built them schools and churches and tried to teach them about God. And the first thing they do is to burn the schools and churches down! This is a rich country, man, and we're ruining it on trying to civilise the natives. Look at their wages—they're better off than I am. A native only needs 10/– a month, a few mealies, a bit of old meat with the maggots in it. But how can I live on £15 a week? I tell you we're wasting all our money on them, man. You can't change them, ever. And the educated ones are all communists! I tell you, we've got to tame them.

"I know we've got all overseas against us. Well, we'll put up an iron curtain, like Russia, and then they'll have to leave us alone. Or if they don't, or if the natives do defeat us, then we'd still rather die as white men rather than live as a lot of bastards with those swine."

What could I do? Curse him, fight him, love him? My arguments didn't get past his ears. I took him miles out of my way to his

hotel in Pretoria. He insisted on standing me drinks in one of the dreadful South African bars where drunk Dutchmen listlessly pile chips on their shoulders. He told me of his failure in business, his disappointments. He said—"One thing I've learned in this life, man—to trust no one."

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The trouble with the Afrikaaner usually seems to be psychological. He won't discuss a question straight, but talks in ejaculatory slogans like quotations from a psychiatrist's notebook. An argument upon *apartheid* does not proceed point by point about practical possibilities, but swerves off immediately on to sex, death, the communists, Ghana, and interminable warnings about daughters. To a psychiatrist the sex-and-death talk must seem a direct symptom of the speaker's own fear, and frustration, and a deep inability to face life as a responsible adult.

Most Afrikaaners are members of the Dutch Reformed Church, whose theology has stopped somewhere short of the book of Chronicles. They see themselves as a chosen people in a chosen land surrounded by enemies. Their national symbol is the laager—a circle of ox-carts out of which bearded men fire fitfully. In this sort of mentality there is a need for embattlement and death in order to feel at home. The organisation for self-destruction is a common symptom of fascism. Events in South Africa—where in the name of saving white civilisation people are doing everything to destroy white civilisation—may become impossible to understand unless the psychology of fascism is recognised.

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Amongst the English-speaking whites the situation is different. Their hell is simply having it good. They have evolved a way of life which depends upon servants, drink, golf, and making money. Into this world the African cannot come not so much because he is regarded as an animal, but because he is needed as a labourer below to keep aloft the balloon of gracious living. And anyway he would probably laugh if he did get up aloft. All this is as true of Southern Rhodesia as of the English-speakers of the Union. The "apartheid" of Rhodesia arises simply because it is unimaginable that Africans could, or could want to, become involved with scenes and characters like those of an English 1930 musical comedy.

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The failures of the Church in South Africa are to do with the white man. There is no contact with the Afrikaaners of the Dutch Reformed Church, perhaps mainly because churchmen do not understand, or admit, the psychological situation. They are baffled by the Afrikaaner, and seldom get as far as even attacking his theology.

The failures of the church with the rich white English-speakers is simply that of the church with the rich anywhere—the church has never made its mind up about money and prestige and the hell of gracious living, and so it has little chance to do so in South Africa, where if you take respect for Mammon out of the social order you are likely to be left with nothing else. This failure is the failure of a Christian culture.

The successes are to do with the Africans, and are made by a few priests and laymen who care and fight for Africans with effects that are incalculable. Not a great number of Africans are regular church members, but men like Father Huddleston and Bishop Reeves have an effect far beyond the boundaries of the faithful. The fact that they are disliked and feared by large numbers of white people, and may occasionally perhaps find themselves outside the normally accepted competence of priests, is part of their very strength and vocation. They are people who love Africans : and love is known by its readiness to do outlandish things for the beloved. The fact that large numbers of Africans know that such men love them, and that in spite of the appearances of most other members of their church these men are Christians, may make all the difference between heaven and hell when the real struggle comes and the Africans are not in a mood to remember many good things about white men.

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The first wholly African service I went to was a Nuptial Mass in Orlando. The church was brighter than any I had ever seen. Everyone was in colour. They sang with an enormous instinctive harmony like organs. You *felt* worship.

The Church of Christ the King in Sophiatown which Fr. Raynes built and which in Fr. Huddleston's day became a centre of pilgrimage for many of the wondering of Johannesburg, now stands in a desolation of ruined houses where only squatters live in what were once African freeholds. But still some hundreds of the old congregation come on Sundays. Old ladies walk the six miles from Orlando : this is the church where for many African Christianity and hope started. But there is a significance beyond this loyalty in the Church of Christ the King. What the Africans learned there of worship they have now taken with them to a dozen other churches in Meadowlands, Orlando, Pimville—in all the new locations of the Reef. The old church stands amidst a desolation like that of Jerusalem ; but its seeds have spread out into new ground and have settled there even if blown by violent winds. This is perhaps the way in which all religion flourishes.

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I was talking to a nun in a retreat house garden. "What is horrible about this situation," I said, "is that in a sense one dreads

that things now may settle down and there will be no more suffering and violence, because it is only by suffering and violence that outside opinion will be aroused to such a pitch that it will interfere. And this is the only hope of change, except that of a real revolution, which again will only come through bloodshed. But one can't really *hope* that things will get worse."

"Well *I* do," the nun said. "I hope things *do* get worse."

One may have to have lived in South Africa for a certain time, and especially (as she had) amongst African students, to be able to sympathise fully with this remark.

# *The Road to Stonehenge*

I walked between the poppied wheat
And saw the circling beeches meet
In Druid clusters on the plain
The air aslant with almost rain.

From Amesbury the pale road weaves,
Armoured with rigid hawthorn leaves
Against the unredeemed arrears
Of lightly dozing heathen years.

Jerusalem here is far and thin,
No deeper than the fragile skin
Of topsoil lapsing to the sea
To set the chalk and old gods free.

The neopagan sky tilts low,
The lorries have no place to go,
The upper terror and the nether
Meet in grey slants and lean together.

The earth more restless than the sky,
The dead more living now than I,
The road a frail and winding thread
Between the resurrecting dead.

CHAD WALSH

# *Comment*

The British have so far given 1/8d. a head to World Refugee Year, against the Norwegians' 3/11½d. This revealing fact is given, alongside much else, in a recent number of *The Queen*, a magazine until recently a sort of sub-*Tatler* but now the mouthpiece and show piece of the New Top people—the people amongst whom David Hicks and Tony Armstrong-Jones are at home. *The Queen* should be required reading for Christian sociologists, for it reflects and influences the common character of the leaders of public opinion. It is worth noting, for instance, that Protest Marches (a marvellous way of meeting friends) are In and so are prams in the hall (but what halls and what prams!) The advertisements, as with the glossier American papers, are both more revealing and more interesting than the text, and order readers' lives to the minutest detail. The composite figure that emerges, I should say, is of course a purely secular one : very able, not very well educated, quite cultured (listening to Bach is In, but the only books permissible to be read are those published in the last six months, which is bad luck for Jane Austen, Plato and all that lot) : not at all complacent but not exactly conscience-stricken : glamorous, married, not very self-assured : and certainly conformist, not prepared to do what other people don't do. The lack is—nothing to be sacrificed for, perhaps no love which demands the sort of sacrifice which at once puts all this ordering of life where it belongs—a long way away. Acquainted with grief—a wonderful phrase, and wonderfully precise in its meaning, but not to be applied to, or understood by the leaders of modern British society.

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Tim Beaumont, who thinks *Prism* is sometimes quite good and sometimes awful, swam into our ken some weeks ago, looking for papers to buy in order to further the Christian cause, so we can feel some mild sense of self-congratulation as well as purely disinterested pleasure that *Time and Tide* happened to be in the market at just the right moment and that he acquired both it and an excellent editor. Whether the new *T and T* becomes a Christianised *Spectator* or an Anglican *Tablet* or a larky paper for the lunatic fringe we wish it well. If we were one of the godmothers and it were the sleeping princess (before she went to sleep of course) we would give it for a Baptism gift the only thing we have to give—which is a sort of prismatic amalgam of seriousness and lightheartedness and a certain resilience in the face of discouragement, and a growing circle of people of all sorts who have become our friends. These include Canon Addleshaw who reads *Prism* aloud at meetings of the Liturgical Commission, and the *Spectator* and *Time*, who quote us as if we really existed.

Religious Telly on the BBC seems a bit inhibited by all that responsibility. It can be very good but the average is lowish. ATV, in spite of ITA, is less worried about results and has the inestimable benefit of that young, harassed and insanely hard working producer Michael Redington, plus his superb and superlative secretary. They have never done better than in the controversial series on the seven deadly sins that went out in March and April. The Romans said that the series (written by Elizabeth Young and Mary Nicholson amongst others) was not religious enough and various other worthies (including The Critics) were similarly under the impression that religion was talking about God in a dog-collar. Actually nothing could have been more impressively religious than these bold, experimental and astonishingly effective programmes, because they actually impinged on the five million watchers who saw their own problems and their own selves acted out expressionistically with a devastating running commentary on the sinfulness of it all. Here was a real analysis of sins in terms of actual known and common situations.

As one aged agnostic said of the programme on sloth, "I got up earlier next day". There could hardly be higher praise than this.

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In the chapel of the Franciscans' house in Cable Street you can hear the juke box of the brothel next door through the walls. The friars were not in when we called as they were about their business, but Father Williamson of St. Paul's Dock Street said he was "a friend of the family" and got the key from the annexe. He himself, an east-ender who derived his inspiration from Father Dolling, has turned his Church House into a cheerful and comfortable hostel for prostitutes who want, or think they want, to leave Cable Street and their job, even if it means going home to Mum. The stories about Cable Street vice are clearly not exaggerated; there is rape and sadism and sodomy, and a common sight for the young children of the district is two people copulating in a doorway or a passage. The Maltese who mainly run the traffic are on to a good thing, the girls come of their own free will and expect to be kicked about by their ponces and to give their earnings up immediately; they are mostly 15—17 but look older; some are very beautiful but it can't last long at that rate. The cleaning-up operation seems mostly to centre on Father Williamson, who is at the moment campaigning to have Church House removed from parochial responsibility (in case his successor does not relish and refuses to continue the work he has started) and establish it on an independent or diocesan basis. This is not easy, but may be made easier by the fine efforts of the Bishop of Stepney to inform himself on matters at first hand. I think Father Williamson will get what he wants, for I can't imagine him being thwarted for long. Part of the success of his

activities is the fact that he has no difficulty in identifying himself with his parishioners, for he was born and brought up in circumstances of extreme poverty and deprivation in the East End of sixty years ago; he is a man of God with all the Cockney virtues.

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It is good for members of the Church of England to visit Wales and remind themselves how far C. of E. complacency still rests on the Establishment. At Lampeter the University College, with its Anglican principal and five other clergy on its staff, is aching to have ordinands to train in a university setting. CACTM, worrying how to reintegrate its guinea-pigs, might do worse than send them there. They could visit St. David's (pop. 1,581) with its beautiful well-staffed cathedral, and the churchless Esso estate at Milford Haven, where telly (with ITN) is issued with all the Corporation's housing to help beguile its employees. They might even do some reading.

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Congratulations to the Archbishops of Canterbury and Cape Town on their fine, penitent statements about *apartheid*, and to Bishop Reeves on all he has done to further the cause of the non-European in South Africa. All the same, a few bishops, archbishops, clergy and monks ought to be in gaol at the moment for civil disturbance. This is the view of those who know Africa best.

# *Property and Prophecy*

Brother George Every, s.s.m.

The Church of England in 1830 appeared to many as part of the outworks whereby the landed gentry maintained their political and social ascendancy. In the new industrial areas, where new cities and suburbs were spreading and new interests growing, the Church counted for next to nothing. A little, but very little had been done towards the beginning of new church building in Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham and the new suburbs of London. The obstacle to this was not only or even principally inertia. The Church had enough zeal and energy to make a good beginning through the National Society in establishing Church schools all over the country. Money was raised extensively for colonial bishoprics, and in some places for foreign missions. But it was impossibly difficult

to change parochial boundaries, or to divert endowments from offices which had become sinecures, in order to endow new parishes and missions.

Parliament could, but would not find the time. Convocation could not, and had not sat for any serious discussion since 1742* (in the common belief at the time, not since 1717). A sitting Convocation, if there was one, was more likely to prevent than to promote change, since the Chapters were strongly represented, and it was to the superfluous wealth of Deans and Chapters that reformers looked when they thought of endowing churches from the Church's own possessions. Much ecclesiastical property was unprofitably administered and, well-managed, might bring in a larger revenue. The very conditions under which it was held, by incumbents whose interest ceased at their death, promoted practices such as collecting fines for the renewal of favourable leases, to the advantage of the incumbent, but not of the see or church. But these created temporal interests with which only Parliament, or a body commissioned by the Crown in Parliament, could possibly deal, not only in law, but in justice and equity. The answer was eventually found in the establishment of a permanent Ecclesiastical Commission of clergymen and laymen, responsible to Parliament, but so composed—in the end, after trial runs—that the bishops had a preponderant voice in its proceedings.

The creation of the Commission and the history of the first and the most important part of its work are the subject of Miss Olive Brose's excellent book, *Church and Parliament, the Reshaping of the Church of England*, 1828—60.† The redistribution of revenue is a dull subject, difficult to treat dramatically, a practical task which attracts the attention of practical men with a passion for doing sums. In practice the work of the Commission in its formative years was very largely done by Charles John Blomfield, Bishop of London from 1829 to 1856, who as Bishop of Chester before that, had struggled with the problem of Manchester, Salford, and Liverpool. Blomfield was the kind of person for whom no problem could be insoluble, no detail too small for his personal attention. He was the life and soul also of the Poor Law Commission, and of the struggle for sanitation. He knew the whole field of the Commission's activity in facts and figures far too well. The Archbishop of York (Vernon-Harcourt) said: "Till Blomfield comes, we all sit and mend our pens and talk about the weather".‡ As a natural result of this, not only was his influence very great, but he was commonly regarded as responsible for all that the Commission did or failed to do. And this was unfair, for no one had a keener grasp of the nature and limits of what was, and is, politically possible. He was a man who loved to drive nails where they would

* See my *High Church Party* 1688—1718, 1956, p. 173.
† Stanford (California) and O.U.P., 1959, 27/6d.
‡ A. Blomfield *Memoir of Charles James Blomfield*, vol. I, 1863, p. 223.

go, and he perfectly well knew that the Commission was under fire from both directions, from the Radicals who desired a general disendowment of the Church of England, and from the landed interest and their henchmen, who feared an inevitable decline in the value of their patronage.

The Commission was also assailed by the Tractarians as an attack on the fundamental rights of the Church, and by Sydney Smith, the witty Dean of St. Paul's, as unwarrantable interference with the liberties of English clergymen. The Evangelicals disliked Blomfield as a churchman with high views of episcopal authority, who did all he could to discourage the establishment of proprietary chapels, financed entirely by pew-rents, in the London area, and for many years refused to subscribe to the Church Missionary Society. On the other hand the High Church party disliked him because he promoted such zealous Evangelicals as were good preachers, supported the suppression of superfluous Irish bishoprics, and, it was said, in an offhand way remarked, "that belief in the Apostolical succession had gone out with the Nonjurors". This, which is very nearly the only reference to Blomfield in Newman's *Apologia*,* has done much to fix his place in the Tractarian interpretation of English Church history.

What did Blomfield really say? That he had a good deal of historical knowledge is suggested not only by references in his writings, but by his literary friendship with the Roman Catholic historian, Lingard.* He can hardly have been ignorant of the many clergy in the previous century who held rigid views on the point of episcopal ordination, but he may have attributed these to the influence of Nonjuring writers, and held that they came in with those who themselves went out in 1691. A witticism to that effect, misheard and maliciously reported, may well have offended many besides Newman. But some regarded the Bishop as a semi-Tractarian, who certainly played some part in the beginnings of ritualism by his insistence, in conflict with Evangelicals, on strict conformity to the rubrics; although he was distressed when these were interpreted to justify flowers on the altar, and lighted candles at Morning Prayer.

He distrusted innovation, and visionaries of all sorts distrusted him. In this there was no difference between Newman and F. D. Maurice. Both had an aversion for the Bishop of London, that sober, practical man. In a sense they were perfectly right. The blinkers on Blomfield's vision are still the Church of England's bane. As his son perceived† : "His object was to divide London into districts of moderate size, ecclesiastically separate from each other", in his own words, "to divide the moral wilderness of this vast city into manageable districts, each with its place of worship, its schools, and its local institutions."‡ His son allows that, "subsequent experience has tended to show that the problem which was before him could

* Brose, *op. cit.*, pp. 69n, 71. † Blomfield, vol. I, p. 228. ‡ *Ibid*, p. 234.

not be satisfactorily solved in this manner", but rightly insists that, "the question was one that had to be dealt with summarily in one way or another, and that, being a new one, there was no preceding experience to show how it might best be treated".

The view that, "possibly parishes of larger size, and therefore better endowed, each with its chapels of ease and staff of curates, might have met the exigencies of the case better than the multiplication of distinct incumbencies with miserable endowments", was probably put forward at the time from the High Church side. Walter Hook had tried something of the sort in Leeds, for a time at least. And Hurrell Froude in his *Remains* had suggested that the industrial districts could only be tackled by teams of priests living some sort of community life. The disciples of Coleridge, Hort and F. D. Maurice, and Coleridge himself had pondered a great deal over the problems of the new industrial areas. So had Charles Marriott among the Oxford men. The problem in church and school was so pressing that practical men were ready to listen to new ideas. But the men with ideas were unwilling to make suggestions in a tone of voice that hoped to be heard. Their voices were raised in protests against any kind of compromise.

The Tractarians were committed, by the very nature of their movement to defence of the Anglican and ecclesiastical monopoly of office, preferment, degrees—at Oxford even matriculation—in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. On their home ground they fought in the last ditch against reform, and in this temper they could not easily promote reform elsewhere. Their constructive contributions were limited to devising projects to make the cathedrals useful, in order that their surplus funds might be spent on the study of theology, and not thrown away to provide new parishes in Manchester and Liverpool. These projects might have been really useful if the theological study intended had been directed, as it might have been by Maurice and some of his friends, to an examination of the signs of the times, an enquiry into the real meaning of the industrial revolution. But in this only Marriott seemed to be seriously interested. The theologians were concerned with theology, the men of affairs with church buildings, and drains.

This, I believe, has a lesson for us as again we try to apply the increased resources of the central church funds to the assistance of particular local problems. If this often means perpetuating our own post-Victorian version of the parochial system in places where it collapsed long before Blomfield, and where he himself knew that it would be a hard task to restore it, whose fault is that? In large part it is due to our fear of allowing ideas and measures to get mixed up with one another. The visionaries are afraid to visit the administrators, who often come to the conclusion that unfamiliar ideas are better kept at a distance. Some can be domesticated, those that provide oil for the existing wheels, but money will not easily be

spent on an enquiry into the presuppositions that lie behind the structure of our present society, into the nature of science and technology, and into the theology of what has become the characteristic approach of religious Englishmen to the Church's task in the world. It might be, if those who thought such enquiries worth while were prepared to pursue them in common with men of affairs. Far too often those who do care for fundamental investigation into the nature of a problem will not begin from where we are now, but deplore such things as the historical relationship between Church and state and the methods whereby members are elected to the Church Assembly, things that can only be altered in the context of a wider enquiry.

We need to restore effective communication between practical energy and theological vision, to learn that the two are one and the same, since the vision of signs of the times is the vision of the possible and the actual in this present world. It is much more than the determination of the facts of the case, but this is part of it. It is certainly not the same as Biblical scholarship, or an ability to handle questions of historical theology, although these come into it. It is something that Coleridge had, and F. D. Maurice, and in some measure Newman and Richard Church, but not Pusey ; in later days John Neville Figgis and Herbert Kelly. It is the wisdom that will not let men get away with finding means to do more of what they do already.

# *The Scandal of Sweden*

(*The first women were ordained in April*)

John Toy

*A young clergyman who has recently spent a year in Sweden.*

The Church of Sweden is proud to be a "folk church"—the means by which God's Word and God's Sacraments are preached and administered to the people of Sweden. Its connection with the state is much closer than ours ; for instance, one of the ministers of the crown is responsible for ecclesiastical affairs and his department looks after the day-to-day administration of the church ; the clergy are members of the Civil Service, responsible to the state for the registration of births, deaths and marriages and for issuing the numerous forms required by a highly organised welfare state. This is why all matters of church finance, organisation and manpower are regarded as the concern of the whole Swedish nation

acting through its elected representatives sitting in parliament. Naturally in many matters of detail the state is content to follow the advice of those most directly concerned, that is, the bishops, clergy, and laymen interested enough in church affairs to be members of its councils. The final authority, though, lies with the crown, and when a matter of government policy is involved, especially one that has the strong backing of public opinion, there is nothing much the church can do about it. Ninety-seven per cent of the Swedish people can claim to be laypeople of the church and, when their interests are aroused, they make their influence fully felt.

The proposal to admit women to the ministry is just such a case. The government appealed to the opinion of the nation at large because they considered them as important as the views of the church hierarchy. This is revealed in the report of the Royal Commission of 1950:

> "If the Church of Sweden was independent of the state, and it was personal confession that made one a member of it, then it would be right to argue that only its members should decide its internal affairs; it is however a national church, a part of the state, and this means that notice must be taken of the opinions to be found outside special church circles."

The report goes on to admit that if a matter of central, doctrinal principle were involved, then the church would be justified in standing by its own viewpoint and not being influenced by any outside opinion; but, runs the argument, the ordination of women is not such a matter.

> "Since", the report continues, "the number of those who value the Christian influence of the church and who are genuinely interested in her work, is appreciably greater than the number of those who actively participate . . . the opinion concerning women priests expressed by the authorised representatives of the people in parliament must receive as much attention from the church as the views of its own people."

This points to the heart of the present difficulties of the Swedish church. For several years now, public opinion, aided and to some extent created by the daily press, has been urging the church not to oppose the government's Bill, and to ally herself more nearly with the democratic spirit of the age by ordaining women. It is intolerable, the argument has run, that there should be in mid-twentieth-century Sweden a section of her national life still closed to women simply on grounds of sex.

Other arguments had certainly been put forward, for example that such a reform would help to solve the present acute shortage of priests, would bring a much needed feminine influence to bear on the direction of church policy, and would enable the ministry to represent more fully the unity and equality of all in Christ; but

these were not the reasons why the matter was brought up in the first place nor why it was pressed with such zeal.

It is against this background that we must understand the action of the opposition party. Its numerical strength and spiritual vitality is undeniable; its membership consists of some leading churchmen, a large number of younger clergy and theological students, and many church-going laity. It is sometimes said that this "Church Rally", under its leader the Bishop of Gothenburg, is an alliance called forth only by the crisis between a fundamentalist type of piety, opposing the ordination of women as departing from the express commands of Scripture, and the High Church party, opposing it as contrary to Catholic tradition and as endangering ecumenical relationships. This is a somewhat inaccurate description since there is not a clear distinction between the two in Sweden. "West Coast" pietism, typical of the diocese of Gothenburg, has always had an emphasis on the Church, its tradition and sacraments, while the "High Church" theologians of Uppsala are distinguished by a very strong view of the authority of the Biblical text. The protest of the "Church Rally" is partly an assertion of the spiritual authority of the church as an institution separate from the state, and partly a call to accept the literal authority of Scripture. The matter of women priests has provided the occasion for the explosion of forces which has lain under the surface for some time.

What of the rest, and larger part, of the Church of Sweden? In their Lutheran view of church and state and the Lutheran doctrine of the ministry, the organisation of the church, being a matter of human arrangement, can be subject to change and revision. During the last ten years or more there has been considerable debate whether the break with tradition in ordaining women can be reckoned as a legitimate adjustment to new conditions or is a sinful departure from the intention of Christ. This debate has ranged over the whole field of Biblical exegesis, Church history, dogmatics, ecumenicity, social conditions and even the psychology of sex, and a collection of the contributions probably comprises the fullest treatment of the subject in existence.

Anglicans must beware of dismissing too easily the opinions of those who have considered the subject at this level and come to the conclusion that there was not sufficient reason for opposing the demands of the Swedish people. The wisest comment is that of the Bishop of Skara:

> "As long as those of us who want to belong to the Lord, hold to the Word, the Sacraments, prayer and fellowship, we can be certain that those questions upon which Christians still have differing opinions can be quietly settled by the law of the Spirit of Life . . . ."

# *Letters*

## RELIGION IN CAMBRIDGE

*A correspondent writes:*

"It is difficult to understand why Mr. Dickinson is so puzzled by the malaise of Cambridge Christianity. As he himself says it is not a very intelligent religion. It is a pity perhaps that *Cambridge Opinion* was not moved to ask its questions in a more revealing form: that it did not ask what are the religious persuasions of the average undergraduate, but what are the religious beliefs of the outstanding undergraduate, the scholar, the prizeman, the actor, the poets and the personalities? I know the answers would have made sad reading for the Church. But this is neither surprising nor the undergraduate's responsibility. Comparisons are odious, but the objective reader is advised to read first *Cambridge Sermons*, and then the sermons preached at Pusey House, or better still Dr. Farrer's *Said or Sung*, to see what university religion can be, and what it actually is in Cambridge. To put the matter bluntly it is the quality of the religion offered to them by senior Christians which alienates the brighter minds of the University. And though I wish it were not for me to say, there is a thing that must be said about the Cambridge Church, it relies for its attractions on what can only be regarded as stunts . . . that is, on actions which are dramatic and attract attention, but do not contribute either to the life or the thought of the Church. When the College Chapel is an integral part of the College Building, what, I ask, is the point of celebrating Holy Communion in undergraduate rooms?

"The most obvious stunt, and the one which most takes in the simple is the Cambridge campaign about the industrial masses. Let me remind your readers of a well known fact. The number of undergraduates of working class origin at Cambridge is normally lower than that at any other British University. This seems to me to lead to two conclusions. (a) That a Christian interested in social justice would be attacking the methods of selection which produce this result. I do not observe that any Christian or Christian Society in Cambridge, not even Stockwood, has done so publicly in the last seven years. In other words at the point at which it is possible for the social justicers to do something about the people they express so much concern for, they do nothing. (b) That those people who are going into the world with a burning concern for the religion of the masses actually know nothing about it: I do not doubt their sincerity, I doubt their humility. They have a need to learn, they are convinced of a mission to teach. I call this, being working class myself, bloody impudence. It is, though I would not call Mr. Dickinson impudent, exactly the same attitude which he displays when he worries because no wind of reform breathes from Cambridge. Who told us

that the Holy Ghost was bound to work through graduates of the ancient universities?

"Superficiality then, and downright arrogance, but what are both if not the sour fruit of Cambridge's most revealing want? It talks too much. It does not pray enough. And that fundamentally is what ails it."

Sir,

I have been a School Chaplain for many years now, and often, when a boy goes up to a Cambridge College, I hear from the Dean or Chaplain of the College concerned asking about his religious attitude and whether he is likely to play a part in College Chapel life. Never once have I had a request for similar information from an Oxford College.

Yours sincerely,
SCHOOL CHAPLAIN.

## CHILD POACHING

Sir,

"Iskra" has with his customary acumen focused attention on an issue which does undoubtedly, if usually silently, embitter Church relations in this country. But it is doubtful if he has taken all the considerations into account. If he will read a recent Methodist report entitled *Rural Methodism*, he will find a plea for some occasion for all children and young people that might serve to preserve *Methodist* children from the attractions of Confirmation at the parish church.

Surely there are several questions here:

(1) Are there not a large number of parents who think that the proper thing to do about religion is (a) to "have them done at the parish church"; (b) to let them (even to encourage them to) go to the best (= most locally popular) Sunday school; and (c) not actually to object if a minority keep up this enthusiasm to the point of Confirmation or full church membership, though of course this cannot be thought to be *necessary*? And is not this attitude frequently of far more power than anything Anglicans or Free Churchmen say? (If we could say something *together*, it *might* be different.)

(2) Is it not often the case that, socially, what is done at "the Church" has more *cachet* than what goes on at "Chapel"? And that, *per contra*, dissenting Sunday schools are better run than established? (They ought to be: they put more energy into them.)

(3) Why does "Iskra" assume that the problem, even when seen in purely Church of England perspective, is caused by "unity-seeking Free Churchmen"? (As if there were no unity-seeking Anglicans!) What about Free Gospel Halls and other places inhabited, as a rule, by unity-ignoring non-Anglicans?

(4) What is the meaning of "the separatist Sunday school movement"? Run by non-Anglicans? Or run nominally as part of

the parochial set-up but actually out of much living connection with the parish church and its worship?

(5) What percentage of those baptized in fact attend any Sunday school, etc., at all?

For my own part, if I were to isolate a single cause, I should plump for either "the modern mind" or the shortage of clergy. In some urban areas the people have for the most part not known their clergy or been known by them for several generations; but I doubt if the attempt to spotlight a *single* cause is really enlightening.

But "Iskra" has rendered a public service in raising the question with candour. Since I am writing unofficially, but in the area of my official concern, I may say that I have long felt that Church relations in this country would be enormously helped by a really honest interdenominational conference on the whole subject. But at such a mote and beam party, we should have to be prepared to say *to* others the things that now we only say *about* them; and endure the same treatment from them.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID M. PATON.

## MONEY

Dear Sir,

Will you allow me to express views held, I believe, by a very large number of the Church of England who are in these days mainly inarticulate? Let us drop all questions of re-union and concentrate on refugees. World Refugee Year is nearly over but refugees are still with us. It is tantalising to think that the Church of England could have quintupled the efforts of Refugee Year by liquidating a mere 10 of our 200 millions of invested funds and applying them to this object. How marvellous this would have been and it would have been a small start towards removing the deadening incubus of those 200 millions. There would also be the enlivening of our 15,000 parishes up and down the country when told that they each had an average of £35 p.a. extra to find to replace lost interest. Is it too late for the Church Commissioners to do something about this?

Yours sincerely,
(Rev.) T. W. H. CHISHOLM.

## UNIVERSITIES

Dear Sirs,

Thank you very much indeed for your article "A New Movement in the Universities". As chairman of the Anglican group at Manchester University, in such a large and dispersed community(?) as ours, I'd like to say how much we long to see this "New Movement" reach its fruition in a Student Federation.

Yours sincerely,
ALAN G. SCOTT.

# *Books*

O BE YE THANKFUL by John A. Bouquet. *Longmans*, 12s. 6d.

MEDITATIONS ON THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN by Adrienne von Speyr. *Collins*, 16s.

ON LOVING GOD by St. Bernard of Clairvaux (*ed.* Dr. Hugh Martin). *S.C.M.*, 9s. 6d.

It takes all sorts to make a world, all sorts to make the Church, and all sorts of books to foster the devotion of the faithful. An assorted trio of such devotional books is the subject of this review.

Of *Be Ye Thankful: Thoughts for the Holy Eucharist*, its Anglican author says,

> "The purpose of this book is to inspire and encourage the duty of Thanksgiving, especially at the Holy Eucharist."

After a 13 pp. Introduction on the Nature of Eucharistic Worship, which itself consists largely of quotations, he takes the five subjects of the General Thanksgiving—that is Creation and Preservation, the Blessings of this Life, Redemption, the Means of Grace, the Hope of Glory, and in a further series of extracts drawn from very various sources links them respectively with Preparation for the Eucharist, Offertory, Sursum Corda, Communion, Post-Communion. This is a fine and thought-provoking plan. One could have done with fewer capital letters scattered about, and perhaps with rather fewer extracts altogether; but it makes a useful book. I should welcome it myself, if only for reminding me that Chaucer describes joylessness as "a rotten sinne".

The second book, *Meditations on the Gospel of St. John*, is much more difficult to assess with justice. In it, the author of *The Word: a Meditation on the Prologue to the Gospel of St. John*, continues her verse by verse commentary to the end of Chapter Five. The Fourth Gospel itself combines simplicity with depth quite perfectly; and, as with the Lord's Prayer, when anybody starts explaining it, we often understand it less than when we simply read and soak in it. This commentator says some glorious things; if I once started quoting, I should find it hard to stop. But, for me at any rate, such sayings jump out from a background of words that sometimes yield no meaning. Further, the meaning that they do in places yield—if I have understood them rightly—seems questionable. There is, for example, the statement on p. 11, that "the Lord *cannot*"—italics mine—"build with the help of those who do not believe," and on pp. 16*f.* the apparent ascription to the Baptist of a full faith in the Holy Trinity. It is strange, too, that in treating of the Baptism of our Lord she sees water as anciently the symbol of purification only, and does not mention the other side of its ambivalence as the universal hostile element, which in that context is of particular significance. All the same, this is not a book to miss, if you can put up with bafflement.

After an Anglican compiler and a Roman Catholic author, in our third book, *On Loving God, by St. Bernard of Clairvaux* we have a Baptist editor of a twelfth century classic, or rather two, for the book has two parts under its single title, first a translation of the *De diligendo Deo* itself, and then selections from the *Sermons on the Song of Songs*. The latter are taken from S. J. Eales' translation from the text of Mabillon, which is something of a pity, for Eales is too literal and too lumbering a translator to do justice to St. Bernard's singularly graceful Latin. The translation of the *De diligendo Deo* is by W. Harman van Allen; we are not told what text he used, but it would appear not to have been the critical edition by W. W. Williams. It is, however, a readable version of a work both simple and profound, yet not obscure, that every thinking Christian ought to read.

A Religious of C.S.M.V.

GOD'S WISDOM IN CHRIST'S CROSS by H. A. Williams.

It would be a pity if the small size of this book (48pp.), led anyone to underestimate its value. For in the spate of writing on religious and psychological topics insight is still a rare commodity, and when found, it should be treated with respect. Insight on the level of intellect and feeling is won at a cost, and the struggle to achieve it is sometimes undertaken only under the impact of severe stress, whether from within the psyche itself or from the outside world. It may well be that the material which forms the substance of these six Holy Week talks has been mined from the inner depths in the course of some such struggle and it has therefore a special richness and value.

In these talks, the author has been able to relate certain crucial experiences of Jesus to the kind of problems which we experience in the here-and-now and so has brought back to earth some of the events of Holy Week. For these tend to be relegated to rarified realms of idealisation, where they seem to be secure and where we can feel them as quite out of touch with our lives and so avoid the impact which they may make on us.

For example, the contrast is noted between Jesus addressing God as "Father" as in the Lord's Prayer, and His cry from the Cross, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Underlying this contrast is the experience of desolation which Jesus had as his picture of God as Father was shattered. As the author puts it:

> "It could no longer comfort and strengthen, not because God Himself had changed, but because this particular human picture of God had ceased for Jesus to be a medium through which God's reality could be conveyed."

The full force of this observation is likely to escape many of us; that is unless we do have an experience of God as Father which we could lose. Our own common form of address, "Our Father which art in Heaven," seems to suggest by the use of the word *which* something impersonal, pertaining to an institution or establishment rather than to a person. If we could attain to the use of "Father *who* art in Heaven" we might be beginning to have something to lose. But often in the quest for security we crystallise our partial knowledge into something static, intolerant and defensive. Such patterns may then block the possibility of further growth and understanding. Even the best we can achieve may be broken up. But in the resulting desolation, there is one clear pin-point of light, namely that this happened to Jesus, too.

The idea of the persecuting ideal is one which it seems especially important for Christians to reflect on. Here again the author shows us how Jesus himself has caught up in the self-same problem. As he puts it:

> "Part of Christ's Cross consisted in the sheer impossibility of doing the ideal thing . . . but he was willing to be involved in the moral unsatisfactoryness of life in society . . . He perceived the absolute ideal of conduct . . . but he was unable to express perfectly in practice the ideal which he saw so clearly."

A certain tension between the actual and the ideal may be of positive value in giving a sense of direction, of striving and of aspiration. But when the ideal gets too high, too lofty, and too distant, the tension becomes something negative and persecuting.

The ideal can never be satisfied and our best efforts fall flat before it, and our feelings of guilt remain unassuaged. Such a persecuting ideal might almost be described as the:

> "appalling Horror standing where it ought not stand."

So it is little wonder that many good people are weighed down with feelings of unworthiness or become enmeshed in scrupulosities or harrowed by habit. Eventually, exhausted and embittered, they give up the unequal struggle. Now Jesus is not defeated in such a struggle and even in the night that he

was betrayed he took bread, which seems to symbolise the will to go on living, to go on assimilating, excreting and relating. But the author brings us back to the words from the Cross and suggests that this creative response itself was taken, as Jesus feels forsaken by the Creator Himself. He cries out and :

> "It is the cry of a person who feels he is in a hell of isolation. And it means that when we feel something of this sort, we are no longer locked up in our own agonizingly individual private world, but sharing in an experience which God Himself has undergone."

In short, these talks show how we can accept our own difficulties and badness and still identify with Christ not only in dying but in living, changing and being born anew. The author suggests :

> "You can make your incapacity to love into your Easter offering."

If we could do this, what crowds there would be at the altar-rails and what a manifestation of the love of Jesus might it not provoke?

W.H.A.

## *Tolerating Tolerance*

ROMAN CATHOLICISM AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY by Dr. A. F. Carrillo de Albornoz (*World Council of Churches* 1959).

How far is it possible, and how far is it desirable for men who believe that they know the truth to tolerate those whom they believe to be in error? Before we discuss this question with reference to the book under review, it is necessary to make some distinctions. *Indifference* is to be distinguished from tolerance; you tolerate an opinion which you believe to be *wrong*, and which differs from your own. Then we must differentiate three primary spheres in which a policy of toleration of indifference can operate: among individuals, within a group (for our purposes the church), and within the state.

1. (a) It is, I would venture to say, impossible for Christians as individuals, or the Church as a group to be indifferent with regard to religious beliefs.

(b) It might be possible for a Christian to hold that the state should be indifferent with regard to religious beliefs.

2. Tolerance might be held to be a virtue in all three spheres—between individuals, within the Church, and within the state. I shall call a tolerant policy within the church *ecclesiastical toleration*, and within the state *civil toleration*.

In his small book Dr. Albornoz examines the views of an important group of Roman Catholic writers on this subject of religious liberty. But first let us look at the traditional R.C. theory on the question. During the nineteenth century a theory was worked out by R.C. theologians according to which there were to be two standards. The "thesis", or ideal, was a situation where the Church was established and where other religious bodies were at more or less of a disadvantage. This situation was thought usually to apply to a country which had been traditionally R.C., and where the government would have merely to maintain the *status quo* by discouraging or even suppressing other religious bodies. It was what Acton denoted as the Catholic theory of persecution, which maintained the existing religious and moral position, in contrast to the Protestant theory which aimed at changing the religious affiliations of the people, and persecuting for the good of the individual soul. The "hypothesis", or second best, in this orthodox R.C. theory applied to a society in which the thesis was impossible; in this case the Church should demand from the state freedom to exist as a group along with other groups in a pluralist society.

Under the old theory, then, a liberal society was very much a second best. Now, the thinkers with whom Dr. Albornoz is primarily concerned think otherwise. Basically, of course, they agree that religious pluralism is a bad thing: it would be good if we could all agree freely in the truth; nevertheless, this difference seems to be a part of the human condition. This being so, the

state should adopt an indifferent, or at least a tolerant, attitude towards all religious groups which do not aim at disturbing the peace. Religious unity is found to be unnecessary for the coherence of a society, and freedom should therefore be allowed. These liberal thinkers have come to the conclusion that, in the words of P. Augustin Leonard :

> "The only answer which is fully in keeping with the free nature of faith is the promulgation of religious freedom, not as a lesser evil, to be borne out of unwilling tolerance, or as a relative good as long as we are living in the state of "hypothesis", but as a principle, permanently and finally established."

There is, of course, the attempt to maintain that the new view is not really new at all. Father John Courtney Murray, S.J., one of the most interesting writers in this school, devotes three articles in *Theological Studies* (1953) to showing that American pluralist society is consistent with the social teaching of Leo XIII. Yet Murray's position, and that of many others in this school, is not that of mere toleration, but of indifference. In a book entitled *Religion in America* (ed. John Cogley), Murray joins with a number of Protestants and Jews to laud the American pluralist state, which, while recognising the right of religious groups to exist, is self-consciously indifferent with regard to their doctrinal teachings. "Secularity," write two French authors in a similar vein, "is the legal expression of the freedom of faith." While it is certainly true that a case can be argued that Leo XIII was in favour of civil toleration (that is, the government holding a certain religious position to be true, though tolerating others), it is hard to see how his ideas can be made to square with the new pluralist conceptions. "The State cannot," wrote Leo, "adopt the same attitude to all religions and grant them the same rights without discrimination," this would, he said, be tantamount to establishing atheism. Again, Albert Hartmann's statement that "it must be recognised as an essential part of every constitution that the sphere of conscience is sacrosanct and independent of the state," is hardly consistent with even the liberal interpretation of *Quanta Curia* of Pius IX (an interpretation which Newman maintained in his *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk.*) Dr. Albornoz does not, I think, sufficiently emphasise the difficulty of squaring this new theory of religious liberty with nineteenth century papal pronouncements; nor does he distinguish clearly enough the *dogmatic* pluralism of such men as Murray from the position of Vermeersch, which, while emphasising the *practical* necessity of a policy of religious toleration, attacks the liberal Catholics for turning it into a dogma. Nevertheless, these earlier papal pronouncements are not held to be infallible or even final, and later papal declarations have been more favourable to the view which regards a plural society as the thesis. The "new view" is now regarded as allowable by the Vatican, although the old thesis-hypothesis doctrine has certainly not been condemned. Cardinal Ottaviani still issues diatribes against toleration, liberalism and socialism, governments in Spain and Latin America continue to persecute Protestants with the backing of local bishops, Jesuits still write to the *Listener* arguing that "matters endangering eternal salvation" should be repressed by the state, while the occasional pronouncements of Father McCloskey are not noted for their love of freedom.

Perhaps the best summing up of the liberal R.C. theories which we are discussing was given by their greatest predecessor, whose name is unfortunately omitted from Dr. Albornoz's book.

> "Religious liberty," wrote Acton, ". . . . is possible only where the coexistence of different religions is admitted, with an equal right to govern themselves according to their own several principles. Tolerance of error is requisite for freedom; but freedom will be most complete where there is no actual diversity to be resisted, and no theoretical unity to be maintained, but where unity exists as the triumph of truth, not of force, through the victory of the Church, not through the enactment of the State."

The spread of this theory among contemporary R.C.'s is surely to be welcomed, and we can only hope that they will manage to convert their

brethren in due course. Lest we become smug, however, it should not be forgotten that civil toleration hardly goes back 130 years in this country; Oxford and Cambridge were only fully opened to dissenters in 1871; and several offices of state are still closed to R.C.'s.

We have not in this review attempted to discuss the question of ecclesiastical toleration, and its relation to civil toleration. It is certain that the Church must draw the line somewhere, and eventually excommunicate persons who transgress the limits; where the line should be drawn, and how much freedom of opinion should exist within the Church is a nice question and cannot be more than mentioned here. Yet we should notice that a tolerant state must be tolerant not merely towards individuals, but towards groups within its borders. It should not, as a general principle, intervene to maintain toleration *within* groups (for example, ecclesiastical toleration) and should recognise the general right of groups to discipline their members and finally to expel (that is, excommunicate) them. But this is by the way.

Dr. Albornoz is to be congratulated on his work, and it is much to be regretted that his book does not appear to be generally available in this country yet.

DAVID NICHOLLS.

## *No Myth, No Mystery*

JESUS CHRIST AND MYTHOLOGY, by RUDOLPH BULTMANN, *S.C.M. Press*, 6/–.

For a long time Bultmann has played the role of a kind of theological bogeyman, a real danger to the faith of unwary theological students. Undermined by the rejection of the "historical grounds for belief", the student's carefully constructed system, designed to be proof against the scientist and the logician, would reel at the unexpected assault: "of course, it's all myth, really, the New Testament probably never happened at all, and even if it did, the stories have no real importance." No matter if our student had gathered this much from the ill-informed gossip of those a year ahead of him, or from a hurriedly-read essay by Bultmann himself, innocently concealed in a symposium, the damage could be, and in many cases was, considerable. It is quite possible to point to men now who would say that their first break with the Christian Faith came through the influence (largely indirect) of Bultmann. Although Bultmann seeks to set faith upon a surer foundation than documentary evidence, the effect that he has is often exactly the reverse. This is mainly due to the difficulty experienced by all but the most industrious and the most brilliant in discovering just what he really has to say.

For this, if for no other reason, *Jesus Christ and Mythology* is to be welcomed: in it we have a short statement of what "Bultmannism" (to quote the back cover) is about. But if this were the only purpose of the book, then it would not deserve the wide circulation that an S.C.M. publication at this price should get. Fortunately, this is more than an apology for a school of thought: it is a positive contribution to the great debate: "in what form are we to preach the Gospel meaningfully to 20th Century man?" It is as such that it should be judged.

Briefly, the argument runs like this: the New Testament is "myth". Myth is a means of expressing the inexpressible, the other-worldly, by using this-worldly, and so inexact, terms. "Myths give worldly objectivity to that which is unworldly. (In German one would say, '*Der Mythos objektiviert das Jenseitige zum Diesseitigen.*')" (p.19). The myths used in the New Testament to express the message of God, particularly those designated "miracles" and those parts of the preaching of Jesus which concern the hereafter (the eschatological preaching) no longer serve their purpose of conveying the Word of God; rather, they have become stumbling-blocks, rejected by modern, scientific thought. The result is that we are left with a watered-down version of the ethical teaching of Jesus and nothing more,

encouraging today's complacency and indifference. In the first century and for some time afterwards, the myths, especially the miracles, were the credentials of the Messiah (see, for example, St. Luke 7 : 22); now the incredulity aroused by the myths creates a stumbling-block that prevents most people from even reaching the true scandal of the Gospel. This is a situation familiar to anyone who has tried to commend the Gospel to his fellow-men, and this, we are told, is the problem that confronted Bultmann as an Army Chaplain. His life's work is to be regarded as a contribution towards the solution of this problem.

Granted that the myths of the New Testament constitute a false stumbling-block, is it possible, as Bultmann suggests, to demythologise, and produce, as from a hat, the pure Word of God, set free from all misleading associations with history and passing schools of thought? Is it true that man's "thinking is no longer mythological" (p.36)? It may be that you can talk about "survivals and revivals of primitive thinking and superstition" (p.36), but is that enough to dismiss the great body of believers, from Roman Catholics to Mormons, for whom myth still plays a very real part? Without wishing to be cynical, it is high time a thorough study was made of the "mechanics of credulity"—what kind of facts can be believed, and by whom.

Myth continues to play a part in scientific terminology: the most exact of astronomers will use the terms "sunrise" and "sunset" with no sense of incongruity—because they convey the meaning that he wishes them to convey. Without the very elaborate mythology of ego, super-ego, psyche, etc., many valuable psychological truths could not be expressed. Surely the point is that myth must always be used with a clear understanding of its limitations. Mythological thinking has never been abandoned, it has simply been tidied and developed as the need arose.

To express religious truth without recourse to myth is impossible. The attempts to do so in this book are valiant and intellectually deeper than the reviewer is able to go, but they do not catch fire, you do not find yourself exclaiming: "this speaks to me, here I am confronted by the Scandal of the Cross more clearly than ever before!" In the process of demythologisation the baby of theological truth is either let out with the mythological bathwater, or else is so desiccated as to be quite unrecognisable and most unattractive. Bultmann seems to assume that we are now able to produce a final, pure distillate of the Word, while at the same time admitting that the philosophy that will control the demythologising process cannot be more than "the philosophy which today offers the most adequate perspective and conceptions for understanding human existence." (p.55). What of the desperate preachers in a hundred years' time, trying to redistil Christianity according to *their* philosophy of the moment? A humbler and more realistic approach might be the cry "new myths for old"!

Scattered about the book come flashes of insight, luminous phrases about the nature of the Gospel and the action of the preaching: faith becomes a new understanding of personal existence (p.73), preaching becomes a proclamation of personal freedom (p.78). One may perhaps be pardoned if one concludes that these stem from Bultmann's own deep and vital faith, which in its turn comes from pre-demythologisation days, rather than from the Word as now expressed by him: "This, then, is the deeper meaning of the mythological preaching of Jesus—to be open to God's future which is really imminent for each one of us; to be prepared for this future which can come as a thief in the night when we do not expect it; to be prepared, because this future will be a judgment on all men who have bound themselves to this world and are not free, not open to God's future." (p.31). Does this passage mean any more than the "old" preaching? Something far more concrete is called for, and this is where Bultmann is quite right in saying that in our age faith has not yet found adequate forms of expression (p.83). Demythologising has been a valuable step forward, but we still have to "re-mythologise" in concrete, practical terms before we can stand up and preach. It is all very well to compare justification by faith with demythologising and to call upon man to live dangerously, in faith, clinging to

nothing but Tillich's "in spite of" (p.65), but this is not the Word in a particular, practical situation, this does not speak to the heart at all, and scarcely to the head. This is not preaching, it is esoteric, philosophical meditation.

Bultmann has done a great service by talking aloud where others have scarcely dared to whisper to themselves for fear of shattering their own beliefs. It is of the first importance that anyone who is seeking to discover an adequate expression of faith in this day and age should acquaint themselves with what he has to say. But we cannot look here for our final answer. Also, and this may of course be irrelevant to him, I can picture many of his readers still asking in despair, " . . . but DID the New Testament happen in history or not?" and we owe those readers some kind of answer.

ROBERT HUGHES.

"I was just thirty, and had been doing parish work for some six years, when in 1890 I was set to my life work. I was to start a college which would train for the ministry young men with no money and with no special education. Therewith I came out into the world, so far as I was temperamentally capable of doing it. There were already several colleges of the same kind, and whether they were 'High Church' or 'Low Church', the ideas and systems were much the same. Because the men were uneducated, the intellectual side must be simplified as much as possible. A few simple text-books, giving the essential facts of doctrine, must be got up. For explanations the student, unaccustomed to reading, must depend mainly on his lectures. That he shall know at least the main facts, know which are the correct doctrines, and the reasons for them, is all that you can expect. For the simple priest all this intellectual business is very secondary. It is not likely that he will come across many clever people. The one thing that really matters is the sincerity of his devotional life.

"I was expected to follow the customary system. I never dreamed of doing so. Educationally it was a hopeless system, but, what concerned me infinitely more, it was hopelessly at variance with all theological principles. These men were going to be teachers of a faith, given in a creed. This is said to be correct, and that incorrect, but I do not care about these words. I would rather ask, why is this doctrine vital, and that fatal, to a man's soul and capacity to live? Someone said it was, and he ought to know. Very well, we must go to him, and find out why he found it so; then each man must look into his own soul, find in his own life its questions and perplexities, its difficulties and diversities. Prayer is meditation, and study is meditation, but God, the love of God, the following of God, is one."

*From the autobiographical writings of Fr. Herbert Kelly, S.S.M., entitled* No Pious Person, *edited by George Every, S.S.M., to be published on May 4th at 15s.*

# *Inhuman Liturgy*

Eric James

Four centuries after the Reformation we are in many ways back where we started. We need something like a new Reformation to restore the Communion to the people, since again it is in the hands of the ecclesiastics—people who are at home with 1662, or 1928, or 1549. All these liturgies come under the same condemnation: they are intelligible now only to those who have been through that process (often euphemistically called "instruction") which makes people not too unhappy with the ecclesiastical cultus now offered to the masses as the Christian religion. To the masses, educated in Secondary Modern Schools, 1662, 1928 and 1549 are about as unintelligible as Latin.

This is elementary. But Liturgical Revision usually ignores the revised facts of today. It tinkers around with prayers (mostly on archeological grounds), alters a few actions, but avoids any radical questioning whether our present liturgies—or any the "revisionists" have in mind—deal with the root problems of liturgy today. It is not easy for such questioning to avoid one conclusion: that the first point of Liturgical Revision must be to make the Mass more evidently a meal.

In the Bible the Mass is a meal. Both Oscar Cullman as a Protestant and Louis Bouyer as a Catholic have in recent months underlined this truth. (Most Christian traditions—though claiming to be "Biblical" almost forget that every reference to the Eucharist in the New Testament, direct and oblique, is to a meal.) Imagine the comments of the author of the Fourth Gospel, that is, the author of the eucharistic discourse, the Feeding of the Five Thousand, the comments of the author of the Emmaus story, the comments of the author of the eleventh chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians on our present liturgies. On any Biblical theology the Mass must be a meal, and the practice of the Church in the first centuries reinforces this contention.

A meal is understood by everyone. We make friends over a bite of lunch. St. Paul says, "First that which is natural . . .". It is the method of our Lord: "Consider the lilies . . .".

We have destroyed that which is natural. We have destroyed the meal and transferred what is left of it to a special building, an ecclesiastical building. We have destroyed the loaf, and in its place we have put little round ecclesiastical manufactures that bear no resemblance to anything a man uses in his *natural* life. We have destroyed the free speech of a meal, and substituted prayers that are stereotyped and archaic. We have destroyed the seating of a meal.

The dress of a meal has been destroyed—so far as celebrant and servers are concerned ; we use a dress that has got stuck somewhere in the church's history. We are no longer a community sharing a meal round a table. (Celebrating from the Westward position is often a subtle way of pretending that the congregation *is* a community around a table). The hymns that are sung have little natural relation to anything within the everyday experience of people.

The Holy Communion is, of course, much more than a meal. And It will, of course, always be something which will need some instruction for its understanding. But without it being evidently a meal it is robbed of its humanity—which is the parallel of the humanity of the Lord in the days of his flesh. It was through his humanity that he revealed his divinity.

Some will fear that such a Liturgical Reformation would destroy what they would call the "Mystery" of the Mass. At Emmaus the Mystery was not done away. What is necessary is that the foundations of the Mystery should be restored.

Others will plead that the development of the Parish Breakfast has in fact achieved what is needed. But is this true? The Parish Breakfast movement has achieved much, but may not the good be the enemy of the best? May it not have largely siphoned off to the Church Hall the energies for revision of what goes on in Church?

There will be two other objectors (at least!). The Liturgical historian will show what drove the Church to turn the Mass-with-a-meal into the Mass-without-a-meal. He will point to the number of movements in the history of the Church which advocated a return to the idea of the Mass as a meal (for it is not a new idea).

Then there will be the practical objector (aided, no doubt, by the historian). He will insist that the increase in the number of communicants has destroyed the meal.

It is obvious that there cannot be a meal where congregations exceed a certain number. But this does not prevent us having house eucharist meals in which there will be freedom in prayer, in seating, in dress. The effect of such house celebrations will be to make the symbol of the more symbolic meal in church more alive to those who take part. In time it should lead to a demand for a number of changes in what goes on in church. In many industrial areas congregations are of a size that will allow the Mass to be a meal on most occasions. (Too often a minute congregation meets in a vast church—out of habit—when it could with advantage meet in literally more "homely" circumstances).

But Liturgy is not a subject which can be isolated. What is really at the heart of the matter is the ecclesiasticism of the Church ; for in this is rooted the inhumanity of the Liturgy. And ecclesiasticism is a sad misunderstanding of, and as often a sin against, the Body of Christ.

# William Temple Association

*All meetings at*
**LIDDON HOUSE, 24 SOUTH AUDLEY STREET, W.1, at 8 p.m.**

## LAW AND MORALS

3 May — LORD DENNING (*President of the Association*) on "Religion, Morality and the Law"

31 May — Rev. G. R. DUNSTAN (*Secretary of the Moral Welfare Council*) on "Law and Morals in terms of Suicide"

14 June — A. W. PETERSON (*Chairman of the Prison Commissioners*) on "The Penal Treatment of Offenders"

(*A charge of* 1/– *for members and* 2/– *for non-members will be made at the above meetings*)

## TRAINING IN THE FAITH

Rev. W. R. DERRY will speak on "Some difficult words in the Bible" on Thursdays, 12 May, 2 and 23 June.

## A QUIET EVENING

will be held on Tuesday, 24 June in preparation for Ascensiontide and Whitsun from 8—10 p.m.

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## SUMMER CONFERENCE

*A one-day Conference on* **"Authority in the Church"** *will be held on* **Saturday, 25 June,** *at the* **Waldgrave Hall, Duke Street,** *off Oxford Street, from* **11 a.m. to 6 p.m.** *Speakers will include the Rt. Rev. B. F. Simpson, M.C., D.D. and the Rev. F. P. Coleman, Secretary of the Church Union. The cost will be* 10/– *inclusive of lunch and tea. Enquiries and applications to:*

Derek Pattinson, 1 Manchester Square, London, W.1

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